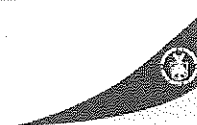


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NOAA FISHERIES
 NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Southeast Regional Office


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How to Submit an Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Consultation Request to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southeast Regional Office

1. Where do I submit my Section 7 consultation request?

We request that all ESA Section 7 consultation requests/packages be submitted electronically to nmfs.ser.esa.consultations@noaa.gov. Electronic submittal to this dedicated e-mail address allows us to quickly log consultation requests received into NMFS's Public Consultation Tracking System (PCTS), to assign and forward them to the appropriate PRD consultation biologist, and to keep an electronic backup of requests received. This e-mail account is capable of receiving messages with attachments up to 25MB. Send the request and all supporting documentation to nmfs.ser.esa.consultations@noaa.gov.

If there are extenuating circumstances that require information be mailed, please send to:

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 National Marine Fisheries Service
 Southeast Regional Office
 Protected Resources Division
 263 13th Avenue South
 St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505

2. What do I need to submit?

All Section 7 consultation requests must include relevant information for the consulting biologist to clearly understand the project: its location; listed species and/or critical habitat found in the action area; a determination of the project's effects to listed species and/or critical habitat (e.g., no effect; may affect, but not likely to adversely affect; likely to adversely affect); and a clear discussion of the potential routes of effects to listed species and/or their critical habitat. These "biological assessments" should be appropriate to the scope of the proposed project. By regulation, biological assessments are required under Section 7(c) of the ESA of 1973, if listed species or critical habitat may be present in the area affected by any "major construction activity" as defined in 50 CFR § 404.02: "a construction project (or other undertaking having similar physical effects) which is a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment."

For projects that are minor (i.e., do not meet the definition of "major federal actions", as defined in 50 CFR § 404.02), we have created a Section 7 Checklist and accompanying Section 7 Checklist Procedures document (bundled in a compressed file format (e.g., PKZIP®, WinZip®)) that lists the essential information needed by our consultation biologists to respond timely to the consultation request. This information allows us to determine the level of direct and indirect impacts a project will have on ESA-listed species and their critical habitats. Examples of direct impacts include those effects directly related to the construction of the project, including loss of foraging or refuge habitat, death of species from construction equipment interactions, impacts from turbidity, and impacts from noise generated during construction. Examples of indirect impacts are things that may happen later in time as a result of the completion of the project, including more vessel traffic that could strike listed species, more fishing that could capture listed species, and more pollution. Any additional information you provide related to the project (including submerged aquatic vegetation surveys, site photographs, engineering project design drawings, historically permitted actions, etc.) will help speed the consultation process.

Please return to our ESA Section 7 page to find additional useful resources to assist you in your consultation request submission. Here you will find the Action Agency Consultation Package links which contain the guidance for effects determination guidance, species and critical habitat lists, consultation tracking in PCTS, observer lists, emergency consultations, frequently requested biological opinions, and ESA policies, guidance, and regulations.

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